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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [MOPS](#) [MARR](#) [UG](#) [CG](#) [SU](#)
SUBJECT: UGANDA/DRC: OPERATION RUDIA II UPDATE (JUNE 15, 2009)

REF: A. KAMPALA 551
[B](#). KAMPALA 571
[C](#). KAMPALA 587

Classified By: P/E Chief Kathleen FitzGibbon for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary: This cable is a periodic update on the regional military operation against the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) known as Operation Rudia II. This report is not meant to provide an overarching narrative or polished analysis of the operation, but rather offers spot information gleaned in Uganda only, from credible U.S. Mission sources here. We recognize the regional scope of the operation and the fact that our sources may be limited in their knowledge and perspective on Rudia II. End Summary.

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MILITARY SITUATION
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[1](#)2. (S NF) Military operations against the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) leadership have been increasingly successful. From May 29 to June 15, 29 LRA fighters were killed, 7 abductees rescued, and 15 weapons were recovered. On June 14, the Ugandan Peoples Defense Forces (UPDF) killed Major George Labongo, a key unit commander under Lt. Col. Charles Arop, near Aba, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Labongo played a leading role in the massacre of 300 residents of Barlonyo internally-displaced persons camp on April 21, 2004 in Uganda. Ugandan military officials also confirmed the death of BG Ocan Bunia on April 27 near Aba, DRC (ref A). In addition, 100 of the Congolese civilians abducted from Dakwa on June 2-3 escaped or were rescued (ref B). The UPDF reports that Congolese residents who came in contact with the escapees demanded ransom in order to release them to the UPDF.

[1](#)3. (S NF) We expect to see the Ugandan military releasing more information about Rudia II. Since March, the UPDF could not report publicly on the operation because Uganda ostensibly had pulled out and wanted to put a Congolese face on Rudia II. By all appearances, the UPDF had withdrawn even though 2,000 troops remained reconfigured in intelligence squads. UPDF Spokesman Felix Kulayigye told P/E Chief the Congolese military was not reporting to the public on the operation despite being given updates by the UPDF. The lack of public information is generating criticism in the Ugandan media because Rudia II's operational successes were not being reported through the Congolese military to the press. Last week, the UPDF decided to use the Ugandan newspapers to report on some aspects of the operation. In doing so, Kulayigye attributed the death of key commanders to the Congolese military even though they were killed by Ugandan forces. Uganda will continue giving Congolese troops credit for operational successes, according to Kulayigye.

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HUMANITARIAN UPDATE
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14. (S NF) Lt. Gen. Edward Wamala, Commander of Land Forces, decided to invite the head of the World Food Program's DRC Operations to UPDF operational headquarters in Nzara, southern Sudan to coordinate WFP food drops in the area of LRA operations. Wamala instructed Uganda's operational commander to invite WFP and the U.N. Mission in Congo (MONUC) to share information about where food can safely reach civilians without endangering local populations or undermining Rudia II operations. (Note: We will continue following up with our WFP, MONUC, and UPDF contacts on the issue. End Note.) MONUC has called together the various humanitarian international and non-governmental organizations to better coordinate the returns of non-combatants, most of whom are Congolese and Central African. MONUC also plans to deploy 60 Moroccan troops in July to Faradje and is opening a radio station in Dungu to broadcast messages to potential defectors and escapees.

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POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT
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15. (C) On June 15, the Government is expected to formally charge Patrick Otim, an employee of Mega FM radio station in Gulu who had been detained in a sweep of low-level operatives associated with a new rebel group, named the Peoples' Patriotic Front. Post reported on Otim's detention and the new group in Ref C. Under pressure from Otim's family, the

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High Court ordered Otim to be charged in court. The Government had planned to release Otim and others after they publicly implicated a number of Acholi diaspora members supporting the new rebellion. Several members of the Acholi Parliamentary Group rushed to the press to deny their involvement with the group and to accuse the government of fabricating the plot to implicate them. Ironically, the Acholi parliamentarians that went to the press are not implicated. The Government had not planned on "outing" two principals, one of which is a prominent Acholi religious leader and the other a nationally-known local politician, but may do so to "clear" the parliamentarians.

16. (C) LRA negotiator David Matsanga continues his desperate efforts to remain relevant. Most recently, he traveled to Maputo, Mozambique with two "special telephones" that the Americans cannot trace" to allow Kony to call U.N. Special Envoy Joachim Chissano. Nuno Tomas, Chissano's Kampala Office Director, reported to P/E Chief that Matsanga promised that Kony would call over the weekend of June 13-14, but that Kony did not call. Uganda's lead negotiator Henry Okello Oryem informed us that President Museveni has invited Government of Southern Sudan President Salva Kiir to Kampala to discuss the joint military operations and express concern about attempts by Vice President Riek Machar to obtain a cease-fire on behalf of the LRA.

17. (C) The U.N. Committee of Experts on the DRC told DATT and P/E Chief on June 12 that it needed information about the LRA leaders and their supporters to put them on a sanctions list. The Committee said that the LRA is an armed group operating in the DRC and therefore falls under its mandate to monitor and expose the LRA's military and financial supporters as well as to report on the LRA's human rights abuses in the DRC.

BROWNING